SERIOUS REFLEXIONS

ON A

DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

TO THE

ELECTORS OF GREAT BRITAIN

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DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

BY

AN ELECTOR.

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MDCCLXXXIV.

TO THE

ELECTORS, &c.

THE preſent critical ſtate of national affairs has ſo much occupied the attention of the public, that it cannot be thought unſeaſonable to ſubmit to it, a few ſerious reflections on the expediency of diſſolving the preſent Parliament, and on the prin-

ciples which ought to direct us in our choice of Repreſentatives for the next.

It is not now neceſſary to diſcuſs the advantages or diſadvantages of a Triennial Bill, or to examine the different opinions which have prevailed as to the beſt period of limiting the duration of Parliaments. Although the Septennial Act (by many learned men thought unconſtitutional) ſtill remains in force, yet few Parliaments have been ſuffered to expire by length of Time. Many good reaſons may be given for putting an earlier end to their political Exiſtence; and a few facts,

facts, fairly ſtated, will juſtify that Annihilation which the Nation now begins to expect.

The Exiſtence of the Prerogative of the Crown to diſſolve Parliament is too well eſtabliſhed to admit even of a diſpute. The wiſdom of exerciſing this Prerogative has indeed been queſtioned in that Aſſembly where it ought laſt and leaſt of all to be queſtioned. No Man, not even a Britiſh Senator, is the proper Judge of his own merits; and it is, in truth, an argument of ſome weight againſt the propriety of permitting the preſent Houſe of Commons to exiſt, that, it has ſtruggled

by deſperate Reſolves to prevent its own Diſſolution. The deſire of a Repreſentative of the People to prolong his political Exiſtence can only proceed from ſelfiſh motives. His inclination to reſort to the conſtituent Body for its opinion with reſpect to his Character and Conduct in Parliament, denotes a conſciouſneſs that he meant at leaſt to have promoted the Intereſt of the Public. A general Election is an appeal to the People, which no real Patriot ever ſhrunk from. If he has faithfully diſcharged his Truſt, he knows that it is the Intereſt of his Conſtituents to renew their Confidence in him: he can even readily

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preſume, that their Candour will overlook the Errors of his Conduct, when their Judgement cannot but approve the motives that influenced it.—But we are not to be ſurpriſed that Men ſhould tremble to appear before their Electors, who have boldly attempted, in their *legiſlative Capacities*, to take from them their Charters and their Property, and to invade thoſe Prerogatives of the Crown, which are no leſs calculated to preſerve the independence of the Subject, than of the Sovereign.

Frequent Parliaments are certainly beſt ſuited to the rational Principles of a free Government: it is not, however,

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to be denied, that the great and continued Expences of frequent Elections, and the violent Heats and Animoſities conſequent thereon, have induced many worthy Men to acquieſce in the Septennial Act, as often as attempts have been made to repeal it. But, if the jarring Paſſions and contending Intereſts of factious Leaders (who in all ages have called themſelves *the People*) have riſen to an heighth dangerous to our Liberties; if the Luſt of Power and Place has confounded the moſt honourable Connections in the Senate, every good Citizen will bear, with chearfulneſs, the temporary inconvenience of a general Election, for the

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ſake of procuring a ſteady Government; and every opportunity will be pleaſing to the Electors which enables them to reject thoſe Members, who have betrayed their Intereſts; and to return others who are unprejudiced, unconnected, and willing to ſupport an *honourable Union* of real Sentiments, and with it, a firm and vigorous Adminiſtration.

Whenever the Houſe of Commons is divided into furious and unnatural Parties (the Public ſhall judge whether it is ſo divided at preſent), there cannot be a time more proper than ſuch a time, for a Conſtitutional Appeal to

the People upon its Differences and Diſputes. That Conſtitutional Appeal can only be made by calling upon the People to decide, in a new Election, who ſhall repreſent them. With a view, however, to prevent this Appeal, the maintenance of Public Credit is aſſigned as a ground of addreſs againſt diſſolving Parliament by thoſe Men, who, for the laſt three months, have not found out or propoſed any means to raiſe it. And the ſtate of the Eaſt Indies is propoſed as another ground by that Houſe of Commons, which, ſome People think, has been willing to conſider the Eaſt only as an Inſtrument of its own ambition,

bition, and diſpoſed to form no Aſiatic Regulations but ſuch as are calculated to create in that Houſe a permanent Intereſt, ſeparate and diſtinct from that of the People at large. Unleſs another ſpirit can be infuſed into our Repreſentatives (if ſuch has been its diſpoſition), it will be in vain to expect any reaſonable Plan to come from that Majority which has fortunately failed in its attempts to reform *India*, by means which many ſober men are perſuaded would have ruined *Britain*.

The ſtate of the Eaſt Indies does not call ſo lond for the inſtant interpoſition of Government as a late Ad-

dreſs pretends. The Carnatic has been evacuated, and peace, a profound peace, reſtored in Indoſtan. The preſent Houſe of Commons has ſhewn itſelf unwilling to make any equitable regulations of the Government of India conſiſtent with any of the known principles of the Conſtitution of this country. A new Parliament therefore muſt be reſorted to. But a new Parliament, it has been ſaid, if you admit that it will have better diſpoſitions, muſt have ſo little information which qualifies the preſent for this important taſk of Indian reformation, that nothing can be *immediately* done: nothing ought to be *haſtily* done, I

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ſhall venture to aſſert, though the authors of deſperate meaſures, who have reſorted to every topic which could enforce the neceſſity of inſtant and unprincipled deciſion, may differ from me. Sifted however as this ſubject has lately been, there can hardly be a man in the kingdom who is not as well informed of the ſtate of India, and as well qualified to decide upon regulations which may be propoſed, as the members of the preſent Parliament are at this moment, and much better than they were when the Bill lately rejected was firſt introduced into the Houſe of Commons.

It is ſaid your country is in a ſtate of diſtraction. The Author of this Pamphlet is one among many thouſands, who are perſuaded that the cauſes of that confuſion, which, when we are at Peace with Foreign Powers, muſt be merely *internal*, will ceaſe with the exiſtence of thoſe for whoſe diſſolution he is an advocate.

The hiſtory of the two laſt ſeſſions is no leſs extraordinary than the Coalitions which have been formed in them; conduct and profeſſions, practice and principles, have been totally irreconcileable with each other; it has been thought more *conſiſtent* to aſſociate

ciate with the objects of the moſt pointed invectives than to impeach them for the ſake of public example; and it has been found *eaſier* to cenſure war and peace than to make them; influence, which was once the ſubject of the moſt patriotic animadverſions, has been vindicated in a more dangerous form by the *ſame* tongue, which damned it—Connections have been founded not on the pure principles of the *idem ſentire de Republicâ*, not of public character, but on the grounds of a *corrupt parliamentary influence*: a worthy nobleman has fairly ſtated that public character ought to be the conſtitutional road

road to office, but at the ſame time he has aſſiſted in bringing into it a *public Character* which not in one ſingle inſtance, but in a long ſeries of maladminiſtration, he has himſelf condemned: in one word, there has been a connection between republican Whigs and high-flying Tories. From ſo much palpable ſelf-contradiction is it unreaſonable to infer, that the preſent Houſe of Commons wants a *ſound vital principle?* from ſo much palpable ſelf-contradiction would not a diſſolution be the beſt deliverance?

It has been already obſerved, that among the reaſons which may render

it expedient in the Crown to diſſolve Parliament, the attempt lately made to bring under its *own immediate* controul and diſpoſition the total Adminiſtration of all India, is a powerful one—The ambition which has been diſcloſed by the Author of that Bill has raiſed a general alarm for the ſalvation of the country; and the nation now gratefully reveres the ſpirit and the wiſdom of that Houſe, which rejected it. Its very being was indeed at ſtake, for when the Throne is attacked, the Peers are bound more immediately to ſupport it; if it falls, they muſt be buried under its ruins. But it muſt be ſtated as a reaſon yet more deciſive

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in favour of this ſtep, that although we are for the preſent delivered from the conſequences of that Bill, the ſame ambition ſtill remains, aided by the ſame confederates, whoſe zeal is not diminiſhed in the leaſt, but probably increaſed by diſappointment. The Author of that Bill has declared his reſolution to bring into the Houſe of Commons another, the ſame in purport, and no otherwiſe different, than merely with ſome ſuch alteration in the Title, as ſhall put the Houſe in a capacity to receive and to paſs it. To check ſuch attempts, and to break ſuch a confederacy, nothing can be ſo effectual as a diſſolution of its legiſlative

giſlative power, " if nothing," ſays Mr. Juſtice Blackſtone*, " had a right " to prorogue or diſſolve a Parliament " but itſelf, it might happen to be- " come perpetual; and this would be " extremely dangerous, if at any time " it ſhould attempt to encroach on " the executive power; as was fatally " experienced by the unfortunate King " Charles the Firſt, who, having un- " adviſedly paſſed an act to continue " the Parliament then in being till " ſuch time as it ſhould pleaſe to diſ- " ſolve itſelf, at laſt fell a ſacrifice to " that inordinate power which he

* Book I. ch. ii. page 188.

" himſelf had conſented to give them."
That the late Eaſt India Bill was a moſt daring attempt to encroach on the executive power, no man will now venture to deny; that it would have probably tended to annihilate it, few men doubt. Is it not therefore juſt that the Crown ſhould annihilate that Houſe which made ſuch an attempt? Is it not ſelf-preſervation? Is not this the criſis deſcribed in the above paſſage from the Commentaries on the Laws of England? Much has been ſaid with reſpect to the voice of the people ou this ſubject; teſtimonies of their diſapprobation of the conduct of that Houſe have been required to

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warrant its diſſolution. What were the Petitions from the Directors and Proprietors of the Eaſt India Company? What was the Petition from the Corporation of London? There is not perhaps a Corporation in the kingdom, which would not have petitioned againſt that Bill, if its contents had been fully known. The precipitation, with which it was hurried through the Houſe of Commons, argues the conſcious guilt of thoſe who planned it. When the greateſt trading company, and the firſt commercial city in the world, ſo publicly expreſſed, as they have done, their dread at the paſſing a Bill of ſuch importance to

the rights individual as well as corporate of every ſubject in the Britiſh empire, they cannot be ſuppoſed to regret, and moſt undoubtedly would rejoice at the Diſſolution of that Houſe which paſſed it. That the Eaſt India Bill was paſſed by a very great majority renders the exiſtence of that Houſe the more dangerous; after having paſſed ſuch a Bill, what will not ſuch a Majority attempt even againſt the Peers, the Crown, and the People?—If this Reaſoning is founded on facts, no man in the Kingdom, except a Member of the Houſe of Commons, will lament its Diſſolution.

There is a paſſage in Dean Swift's works * which ſeems ſo directly applicable to the preſent Criſis, that it may be well worthy the attention of the Public, and particularly the Houſe of *Commons*: "This encourageth me "to hope (ſaid the Dean) that, during "the preſent lucid Interval, the Mem-"bers, retired to their Homes, may "ſuſpend awhile their *acquired com-*"*plexions*; and, taught by the Calm-"neſs of the Scene and the Seaſon, "re-aſſume the Sedateneſs of their "Temper. If this ſhould be ſo, it

* Conteſts and Diff. in Athens and Rome, ch. 5,

"would

" would be wiſe in them, as indivi-
" dual and private Mortals, to look
" back a little upon the Storms they
" have *raiſed*, as well as thoſe they
" have *eſcaped*; to reflect, that they
" have been Authors of a new and
" wonderful thing in *England*;
" which is, for a Houſe of Commons
" to loſe the univerſal Favour of the
" Numbers they repreſent: to obſerve,
" how thoſe whom they thought fit to
" perſecute for Righteouneſs ſake, have
" been openly careſſed by the People;
" and to remember, how themſelves
" ſat in fear of their Perſons from po-
" pular Rage. Now, if they would
" know the Secret of all this unprece-
" dented

" dented Proceeding in their *Maſters*;
" they muſt not impute it to their
" freedom in Debate, or declaring their
" opinions; but to that unparliamen-
" tary abuſe of ſetting Individuals
" upon their Shoulders, who were
" hated by God and Man. For, it
" ſeems, the Maſs of the People, in
" ſuch Conjunctures as this, have
" opened their Eyes, and will not en-
" dure to be governed by *Clodius* and
" *Curio*, at the Head of their *Myrmi-*
" *dons*; although theſe be ever ſo
" numerous, and compoſed of their
" own Repreſentatives." This Para-
graph will, it is hoped, lead to very
ſerious Reflections on the danger of a

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Majority of the Houſe of Commons being ſuffered to exiſt in oppoſition to the wiſhes of the People.

Among the many political Hereſies of theſe times, one curious poſition is, that the Miniſter, who adviſes the King to diſſolve the Parliament againſt the ſenſe of the Houſe of Commons, deſerves cenſure, nay perhaps Impeachment. This would not have been noticed, if it had not been advanced by a popular Leader. The poſition means neither more nor leſs than this, that every Man is to be cenſured, who gives advice to the King, *except that popular Leader*; and his advice would have been to paſs

a Bill

a Bill to render the Crown unworthy the royal Brows of him who wears it. Such advice would have been as treacherous as that which was given Charles the Firſt, when he paſſed thoſe Acts which brought him to the Block. Thanks to the Lords, it has been fruſtrated. To cenſure the Advice, is to check the Exerciſe of, and indirectly to deny, that which the Confederates want to deſtroy, the Prerogative of the Crown to diſſolve Parliament.

Another heretical Doctrine, more prevalent in the preſent than in any former Houſe of Commons, is, that the end and intent of Delegation is to

ſet up one Miniſter, and to pull down another. The influence of the Houſe of Commons, on the appointment of Miniſters, has begot in ſome Members the wild Idea, that they have derived from us a Power to dictate to the King what ſet of Men he ought to employ; but it does not require much argument to prove, that if the choice of Miniſters is confined to one or two Men, and a *Majority* ſhould determine to reſiſt the Meaſures of every other Perſon appointed by the Crown, that the executive Government of this Country would be diveſted out of that *ſingle Perſon*, in whom it has been immemorially placed by general conſent, for the general good. The office

office of King would ceaſe to exiſt, and that Majority would in fact become *Sovereign*. In ſuch a Criſis there is no other alternative than a Diſſolution of the Crown, or a Diſſolution of ſuch an Houſe of Commons. It is painful to a peaceable Subject to reflect, that he lives in thoſe days when it is neceſſary to ſtate this alternative which the Conſtitution has taught him: but Truth and Juſtice call upon him to ſtate it. To ſuppoſe that the King would nominate a ſervile Favourite, the mere object of his whim, for the Miniſter of Britain, or that an Houſe of Commons would acquieſce in ſuch a nomination, is no leſs abſurd than to

ſuppoſe a Britiſh Monarch is bound to receive into his Service the Leader of any particular Set of Men; nay, it is as abſurd as to ſuppoſe, that he ſhould retain in it a Miniſter whoſe Meaſures would have led him to his own Deſtruction. The diſcretionary Power of appointing and oppoſing lies between the two Extremes. Neither the choice of Men, nor the oppoſition to them, ought to be merely perſonal. Moderate *Whigs* and moderate *Tories* have always thought the privilege of examining into the Conduct of evil Counſellors, impeaching and puniſhing them, ſufficient to preſerve the Liberties of the People; that a bad Miniſter

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of the King, is much leſs to be dreaded than a bad Miniſter of the *Houſe of Commons*, againſt whom the People can have no redreſs, but in the Exerciſe of that Prerogative which has, therefore, been providentially veſted in the Crown, to defeat the views of a ſelf-intereſted Senate.

It does not yet appear that there is any intention to violate the Septennial Act by prolonging the duration of Parliament beyond Seven Years, although the Legiſlature can do it with the ſame juſtice that it violated the Triennial Act. The Houſe of Commons will for the preſent (we are told) be con-

tent with being permitted to continue during the remainining Term of its Conſtitutional Exiſtence. But the four Years, for which time the entire Patronage of the Eaſt Indies was to have been veſted in certain *Nominees*, might be found to be a period in which one Man might contrive effectually to fix himſelf for Life in Adminiſtration. In a leſs ſpace of Time the long Parliament of Charles the Firſt, which began alſo by aſſuming *Sovereign Executive Powers*, brought down upon their Fellow-ſubjects all the Horrors of a Civil War, which not only deſtroyed the King and Lords, but at length terminated in the aboli-

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tion of the Houſe of Commons itſelf, *by one of its own creatures.* The firſt Seſſion of the long Parliament deſerves the moſt ſincere Gratitude from Poſterity, for having aboliſhed the High Commiſſion Court, and the Court of Star Chamber, and for having effected many other very ſalutary Regulations. The ſecond Seſſion of the preſent Parliament will be no leſs gratefully remembered, for having put an end to a corrupt Adminiſtration and an unfortunate conteſt with our late Colonies, for having aboliſhed the Boards of Trade and Green Cloth, for having paſſed the Contractors Bill, and for having, by many other prudent Laws,

reſtored

reſtored the Independence of the Britiſh Commons. Thus far the Aims and the Struggles of both were juſt and honourable; but there is a line beyond which to paſs is Death or Anarchy! and if the time is come, or ſhall come, when the Houſe of Commons does not know where to ſtop, it ought to be diſſolved. The Act for the perpetual Parliament was fatal to the Legiſlature which made it; and the great Hiſtorian of thoſe Times, in his obſervations upon it, ſays: "That it "removed the Land-marks, and de-"ſtroyed the Foundation of the King-"dom." *Some* late proceedings ſo

* Clar. Hiſt. book III. p. 261.

ſtrongly

ſtrongly mark the Will of the Houſe of Commons to continue its own duration, and ſome late Reſolutions, the *purpoſes* for which they wiſh to continue it, that unleſs our Repreſentatives recollect themſelves, and ſee through the Aims of thoſe who have led them on to the meaſures they have adopted; the Prerogative of diſſolving Parliament was never more neceſſary than at preſent, to the ſafety of the Crown, and never could be exerted more beneficially for the People.

There can be no doubt, that in the *middle* of a Parliament, when the Members are moſt apt to forget

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their Conſtituents, circumſtances may concur to render a Diſſolution expedient; it is to be hoped, there never will be a Miniſter ſo timid as not to adopt and to adviſe it, when theſe circumſtances do concur. Danger alone calls forth great Abilities into Exertion, and then are the Virtues of thoſe Repreſentatives, who really poſſeſs the Confidence of the People, fully diſplayed. That Man deſerves every thing of his Country, who boldly ventures to ſtand forth the Champion of its Conſtitution againſt every ambitious Confederacy that appears in the Kingdom; and who, by diſſolving Parliament (when he thinks it ought to

be diſſolved), calls for the Deciſion, not of the Houſe of Commons, but of the People at large upon the Propriety of his Conduct.

The good People of England are no leſs renowned for their Loyalty, than a zealous Attachment to their Rights and Liberties. The Conſtitution has accurately marked out the Prerogatives of the Sovereign, and the Privileges of the Subject; and our Hiſtory furniſhes ſtriking Inſtances of faithful Allegiance, and firm Reſiſtance to regal Authority. If, therefore, the queſtion ever ariſes, whether an Adminiſtration ſhall be appointed by the ſupreme

Magiſtrate ſubject to the *controul*, not the *Direction*, of the Houſe of Commons, if there ſhould be a ſtruggle to *maſter* the Crown: let not the Miniſter heſitate in ſuch a criſis, if ſuch a criſis ever takes place, to diſſolve Parliament; let him appeal to the people, and he may be aſſured that they would ſhew their loyalty by rejecting thoſe Candidates who attempted to encroach on the executive power to the danger of public and conſtitutional Liberty; that they would withdraw their confidence from thoſe who had been ready to lay violent hands on *private* property; and that they would diſplay their allegiance by ſupporting ſuch men

men as feel their own Intereſt *inſepa-rable* from that of a Prince wiſhing to ſecure his for the purpoſe of protecting theirs.

Thus much on the expediency of diſſolving Parliament: permit an elector to ſubjoin a few Reflections with reſpect to the choice of Repreſentatives.

There is no ſubject with regard to which Paſſion and Intereſt, public and private motives oftener claſh and interfere, than the Preference which is due to one Candidate more than another. It would be unpardonable to reject

reject the ſolicitations of friendſhip or connection in any other than a public cauſe. Gratitude to an individual muſt give way to the welfare of the ſtate. In the hour of danger, and in the day of trial, freemen will decide upon public principles, and determine their choice of men according to the *complexion* of the times. If haſty ſtrides are making to bring *the Crown* into compleat ſubjection, the preſent criſis requires an Houſe of Commons more ready to uphold, than to reduce its prerogative. A premature Diſſolution will doubtleſs excite the meaneſt elector to enquire into the cauſe, and to know the real Authors of it. The

true

true cauſe then is the *introduction* of the Eaſt India Bill into the Houſe of Commons, not the *rejection of it* by the Houſe of Lords; and the *real* Author of it, *the Man* who introduced it. In the conſideration of that Bill has been involved the *cauſe* of an antient limited Monarchy, protecting the Rights of the people beyond any other known ſyſtem of human policy. The Author of it boldly declared that he would riſque his character on its merits. The nation decides againſt its merits, and of courſe againſt *that* character. His Majeſty, judging, as his People judge, of the Bill, has not thought proper to conſide longer in a Miniſter, who,

under

under the pretext of aboliſhing Aſiatic Deſpotiſm, brought in this Bill, which indirectly tended to controul the Crown he ſerved, and to affect the deareſt Rights of the People, which the Crown is bound to watch over. If therefore there ſhould be a Diſſolution, the electors will determine whether the late change in Adminiſtration, and the conſequent Diſſolution, are to be aſcribed to cloſet intrigue and ſecret influence, or the well-grounded apprehenſions for the ſafety of the King and People, ariſing from *encroachments* on the executive power, meditated and attempted *by its own ſervants*; and from a project to con-

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vert its neceſſary influence againſt itſelf, and againſt the people. When they have determined, they will expreſs their judgment by ſupporting, or withholding their ſupport from thoſe, who voted for the Eaſt India Bill.

That Bill has at length opened our eyes; we can now ſee the real characters of Men, and it is according to the *votes* which they have given that we can beſt judge of their pretenſions to our future confidence. By that, and the many other great national queſtions which have been decided within the laſt two years, every Member of

Parliament has been fairly put to the trial of his wiſdom and integrity. An obſtinate perſeverance in the American war, ſhewed the foreſight of thoſe who would ſacrifice Britain for the viſionary proſpect of recovering her late colonies. The peace, which was approved of by the merchants trading to the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, and the City of London, though not indeed by the *majority* of the Houſe of Commons, manifeſted ſome anxiety at leaſt to ſupply, by the return of Commerce, the loſs we have ſuſtained by the diſmemberment of the Empire; and, laſtly, the Eaſt India Bill fully diſcriminated between the real

Friends

Friends of the Conſtitution, and the Confederates againſt it.

If an obſerver was diſpoſed to arrange in claſſes the preſent Repreſentatives of the People, he might with very little variation of character divide them in the following manner :

The *firſt claſs*, he would ſay, is a corps well experienced in the arts of Diviſion, which, having received all of them their wages, and many their political exiſtence from the Miniſter who proſecuted the American war, ſtill thinks itſelf bound to ſupport him : this claſs perſevered to the laſt in the

American meaſures, oppoſed every ſpecies of reform, and every effort to reduce the inordinate influence of the Crown, cenſured the peace which *their war* had rendered neceſſary; and, laſtly, ſupported the India Bill.

The *ſecond*, he would obſerve, chiefly conſiſts of very deſperate Whigs, leagued under a Leader, of whom it may be doubted whether he is not more dangerous *in* than *out* of Place; who has had few ſcruples as to the means of attaining power, and fewer ſtill as to the mode of preſerving it. Whilſt his great abilities were diſplayed in oppoſing bad Miniſters,

bad Meaſures, and the overgrown Influence of the Crown, the Country gave him the credit of acting upon the pureſt principles; but when his inordinate ambition was diſcovered, and he began to invade the rights of his fellow-ſubjects, and to aim at eſtabliſhing for himſelf a greater influence than the Crown ever had, the Public began to queſtion his principles; and they are at length ſatisfied, that a Miniſter, who is not the Friend of the *juſt* prerogatives of the Crown, cannot be the Friend of the People.

Theſe two claſſes have joined their Force under an arbitrary *Duumvirate*, and

and their firſt characteriſtic attempt has been, under the ſpecious form of an India Bill, to *proſcribe* both King and Conſtitution.

The third claſs, he would tell you, is a ſmall Band of honeſt Men, among whom are to be found the Names of *Powis*, *Pitt*, *Honeywood*, *Aſtley*, and *Wray*, Men who have ſtrenuouſly contended againſt the exorbitant Influence of the Crown, without attempting to aſſume it to themſelves. When they have oppoſed a Miniſter, they have acted from a Conviction of the badneſs of his Meaſures; and when they have ſupported new Miniſters, their Conduct

duct has been regulated by an honeſt Inclination to give them a fair Trial; and, laſtly, they have, with abhorrence, reprobated the principles of the Eaſt India Bill.

To ſuſtain, to ſtrengthen, and to increaſe this Band, is the Duty of all who are entruſted with the Right of Voting for Repreſentatives. The prudent Exerciſe of this Franchiſe becomes every Day more important, and more neceſſary, as the ſtate of Repreſentation becomes more defective. In ſome Boroughs, the Spirit of Election is quite gone; in others, enſlaved. It is therefore neceſſary for the independent

dent Towns and Counties to be more circumſpect in the choice of Members, not merely adverting to their Wealth and Connection, but electing Men who have Abilities to bear down the *Nominees* of the Great and Powerful. The Houſe of Commons is, indeed, ſometimes very much enlightened by the perſons who are ſent into it by the pooreſt Electors, influenced in their voices by the great Men whoſe Vaſſals they are. But it is univerſally allowed, that our national Virtue and Proſperity depends on the united Efforts of thoſe Men who are mutually connected with us *by actual Election and real Choice.*

Theſe,

Theſe, my Countrymen, are the genuine ſentiments of an Elector, who would enjoy, with thankfulneſs, in ſilence, the Bleſſings of that profound Peace which now prevails in every quarter of the world, if our inteſtine Tumults and Diviſions did not render an appeal to the Publick neceſſary. The ſhortneſs of the preſent Receſs of Parliament argues an impatience in the late Miniſters to regain their Places. To this principle too we may attribute an Enquiry into the ſtate of the Nation. If they ſucceed, we muſt naturally expect that Demands of *Peerages* will be inſolent, and irreſiſtible;

that Reſentment will furniſh *other India Bills*, and other Schemes, alike fatal to the Crown and the Country: *Dii potius avertant!* A Miniſter is called forth from that Houſe, where his Name, his Abilities, and unblemiſhed Character, are highly revered; whoſe Zeal (whether judicious is not now the queſtion) to reform the State of our Repreſentation has at leaſt diſplayed an unfeigned hereditary Love for the People; and whoſe Anxiety to reſcue the King from being impoſed on, has demonſtrated his regard for an ancient Conſtitution: whether he is to be ſupported, ought to depend on the Rectitude of the Meaſures he

means to purſue; he ought at leaſt to be fairly tried. If that Trial ought to be made, and if it cannot be made unleſs a new Parliament is called; if the Authors of the late India Bill muſt be forced again into office, by Majorities acting againſt what we, who are out of the Houſe, know to be the univerſal wiſh of the People at large, unleſs that new Parliament is called: You and I are bound moſt earneſtly to pray, that he, who may conſtitutionally ſay it, will ſay, PROVOCO AD POPULUM.

FINIS.